

Bemidji area visitor profile study: Winter 2017-18 findings

Xinyi Qian, Ph.D., & Daniel Erkkila, Ph.D., Tourism Center



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION

Background

Consumer profile information is essential for tourism marketing and planning. Visit Bemidji contracted with Tourism Center to conduct a visitor profile project in the Bemidji area from December 1, 2017 to November 30, 2018. The **purpose** of this project was to better understand attendees' characteristics and travel behaviors, and subsequently:

- inform marketing decisions,
- enhance tourism offerings in Bemidji, and
- maximize tourism industry benefits to the community.

Methods

Study setting 13,431 residents (U.S. Census, 2018)
A major tourism destination with many natural assets & attractions

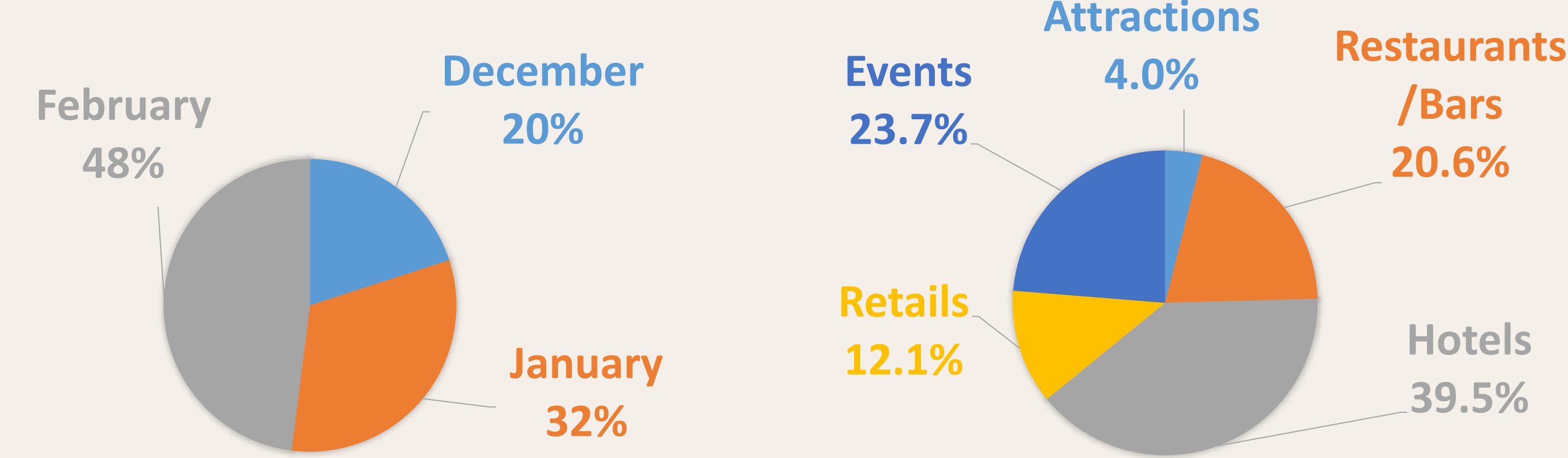
Sampling Convenience sampling (N=374)
29 sites in Bemidji & surrounding areas

Data collection Onsite intercept survey

Questionnaire Visitor characteristics
Travel party & trip profile
Trip purpose & activities
Expenditure

Analysis Descriptive in SPSS (version 24.0)

Response rate



Key Findings



Fig. 1: Bemidji winter visitors' average age (n=337)



Fig. 2: Bemidji winter visitors' average travel party size (n=365)



Fig. 5: Average number of nights spent in Bemidji (n=339)

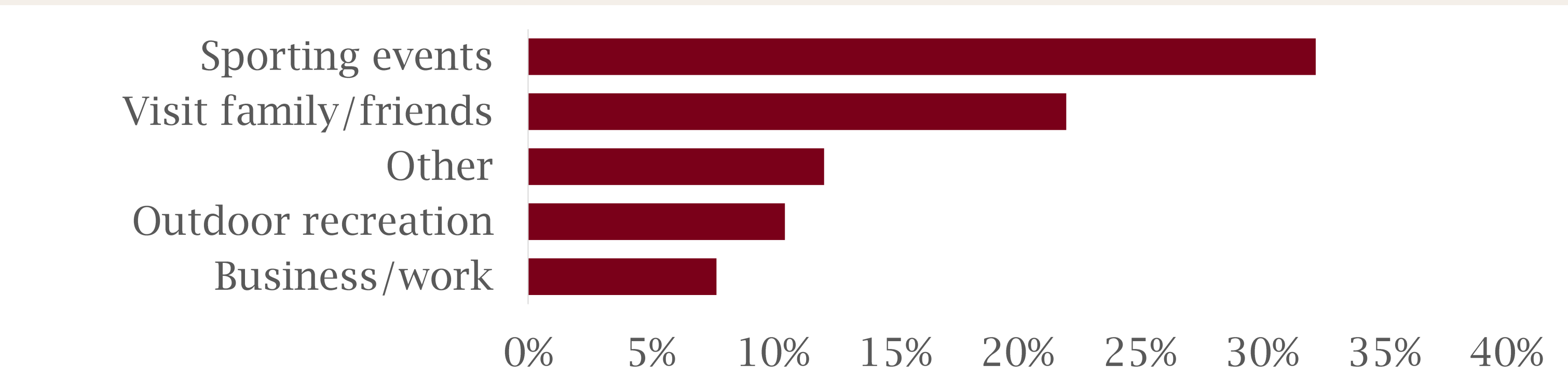


Fig. 4: Bemidji winter visitors' top five reasons for making the trip (n=363)

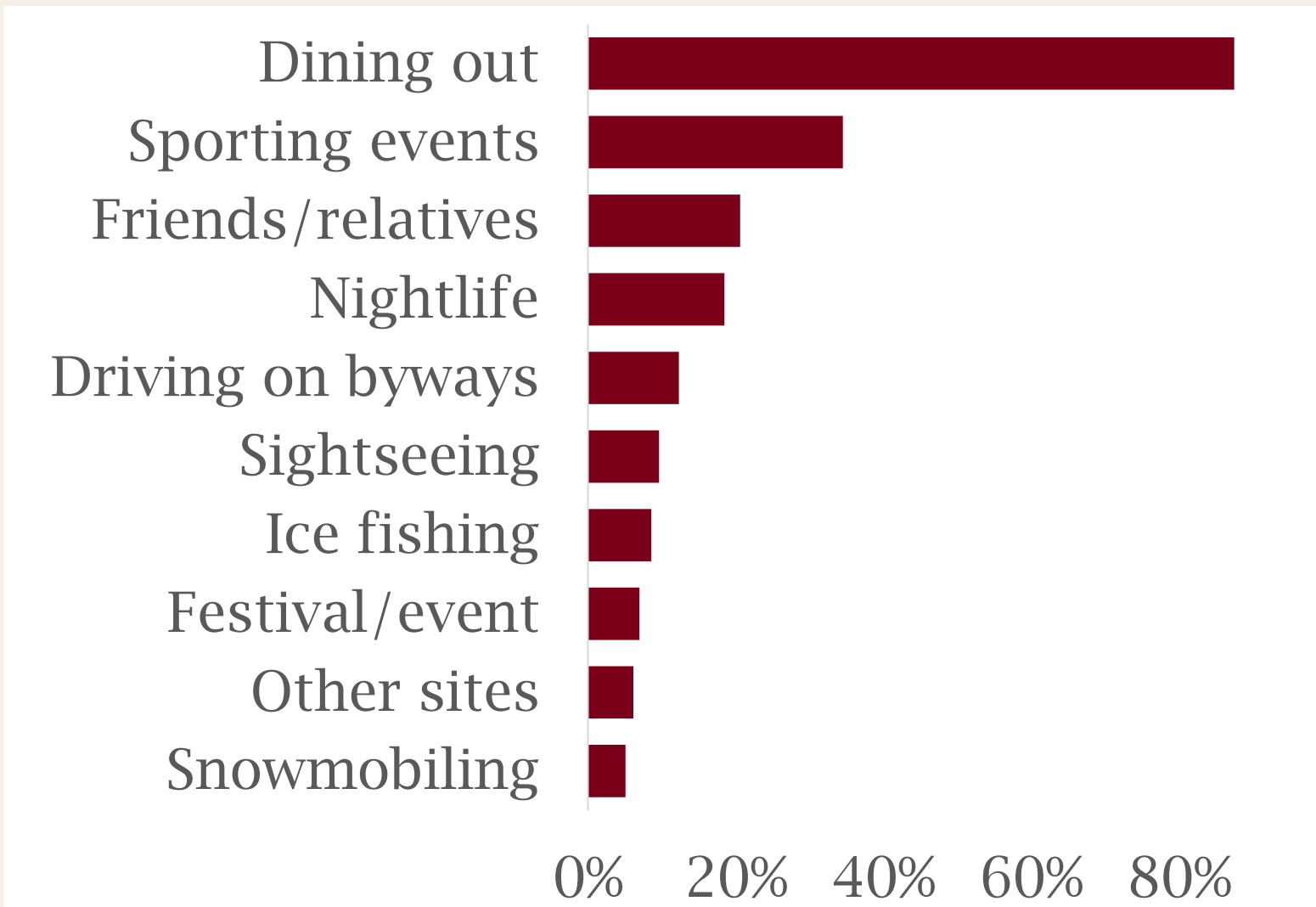


Fig. 5: Activities Bemidji winter visitors most frequently participated in (n=374)

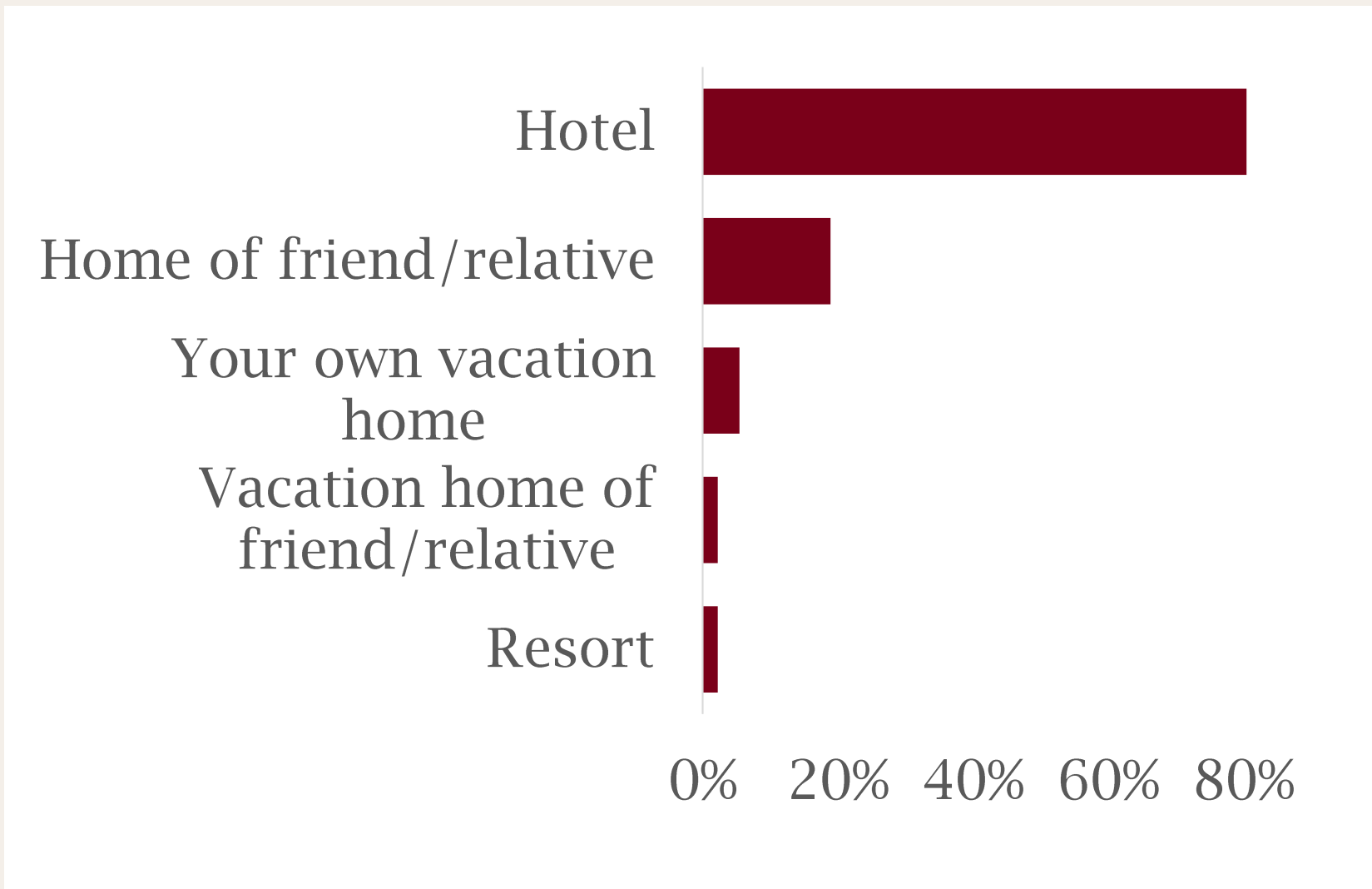


Fig. 6: Top five lodging types used by Bemidji winter visitors (n=374)

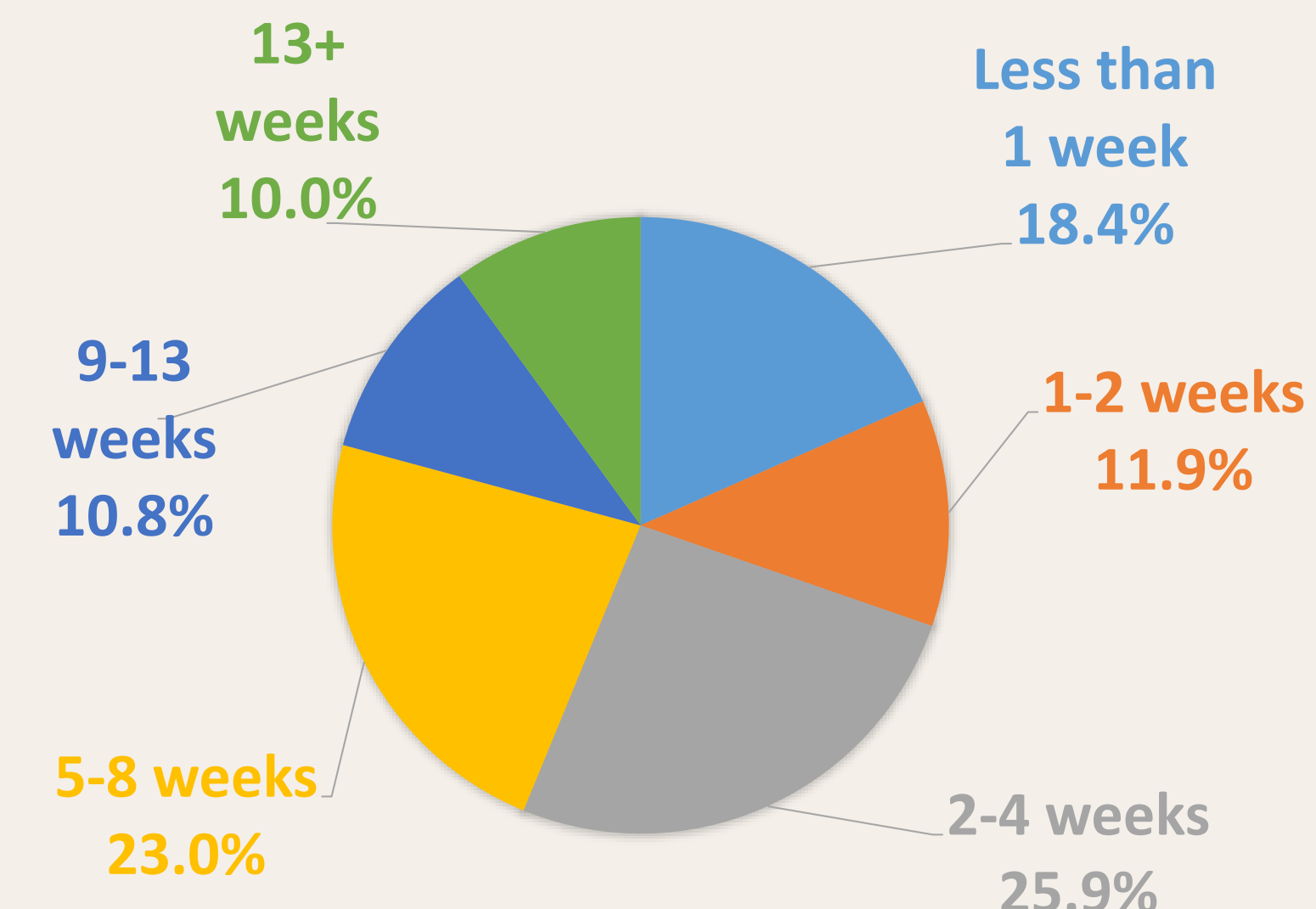


Fig. 7: Trip planning timeframe of Bemidji winter visitors (n=370)

	Mean (dollars)	Median (dollars)
Lodging	51.8	38.3
Restaurants/bars	41.0	18.7
Shopping	22.8	0.0
Transportation	18.1	10.0
Miscellaneous	9.7	0.0
Entertainment/attractions	7.4	0.0
Groceries	5.9	0.0
Fishing-related expenses	5.0	0.0
Recreation (non-fishing)	2.4	0.0
Total	164.2	112.5

Table 1: Bemidji winter visitors' average daily personal spending (n=311)

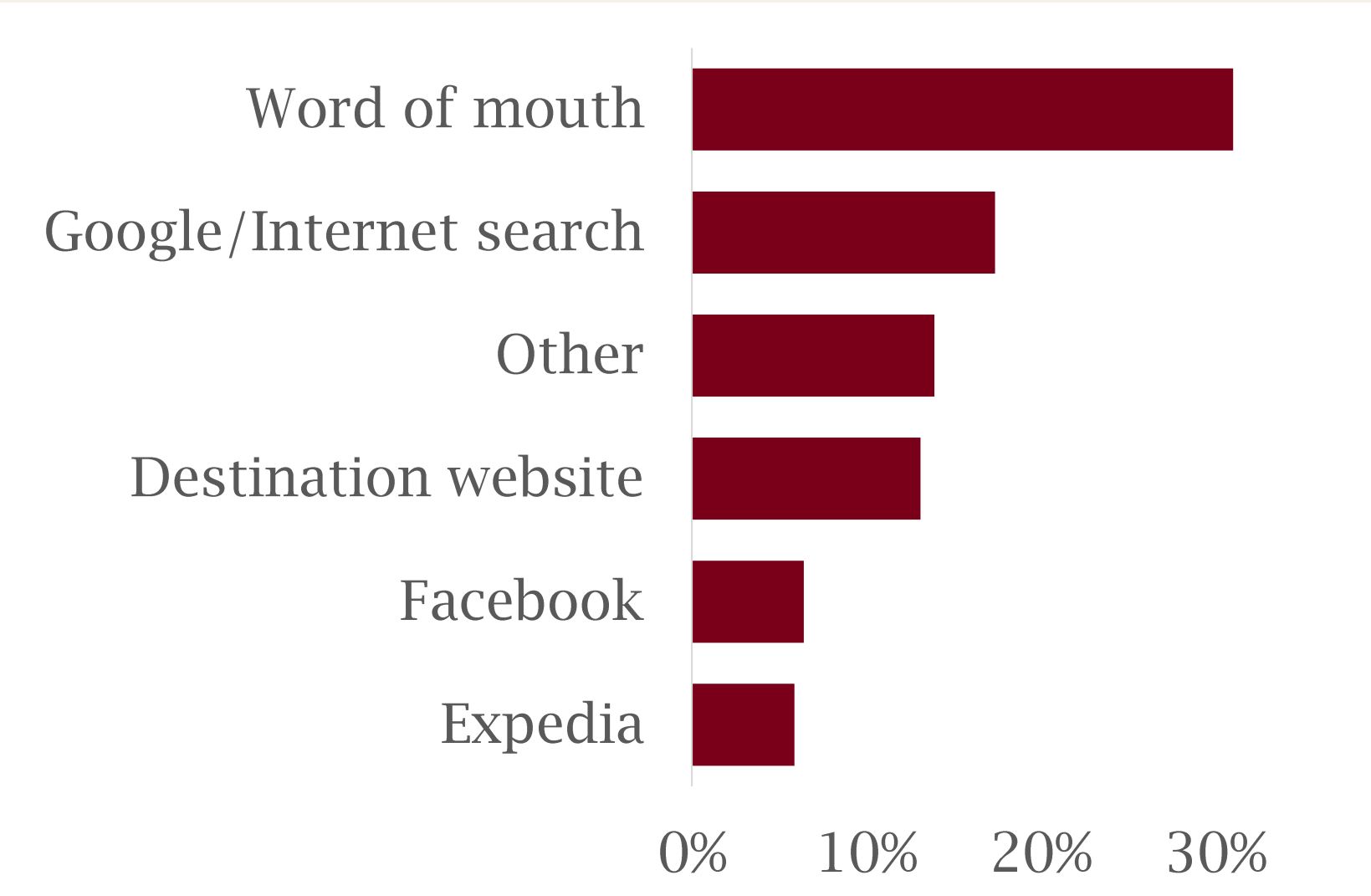


Fig. 8: Bemidji winter visitors' top six information sources (n=374)

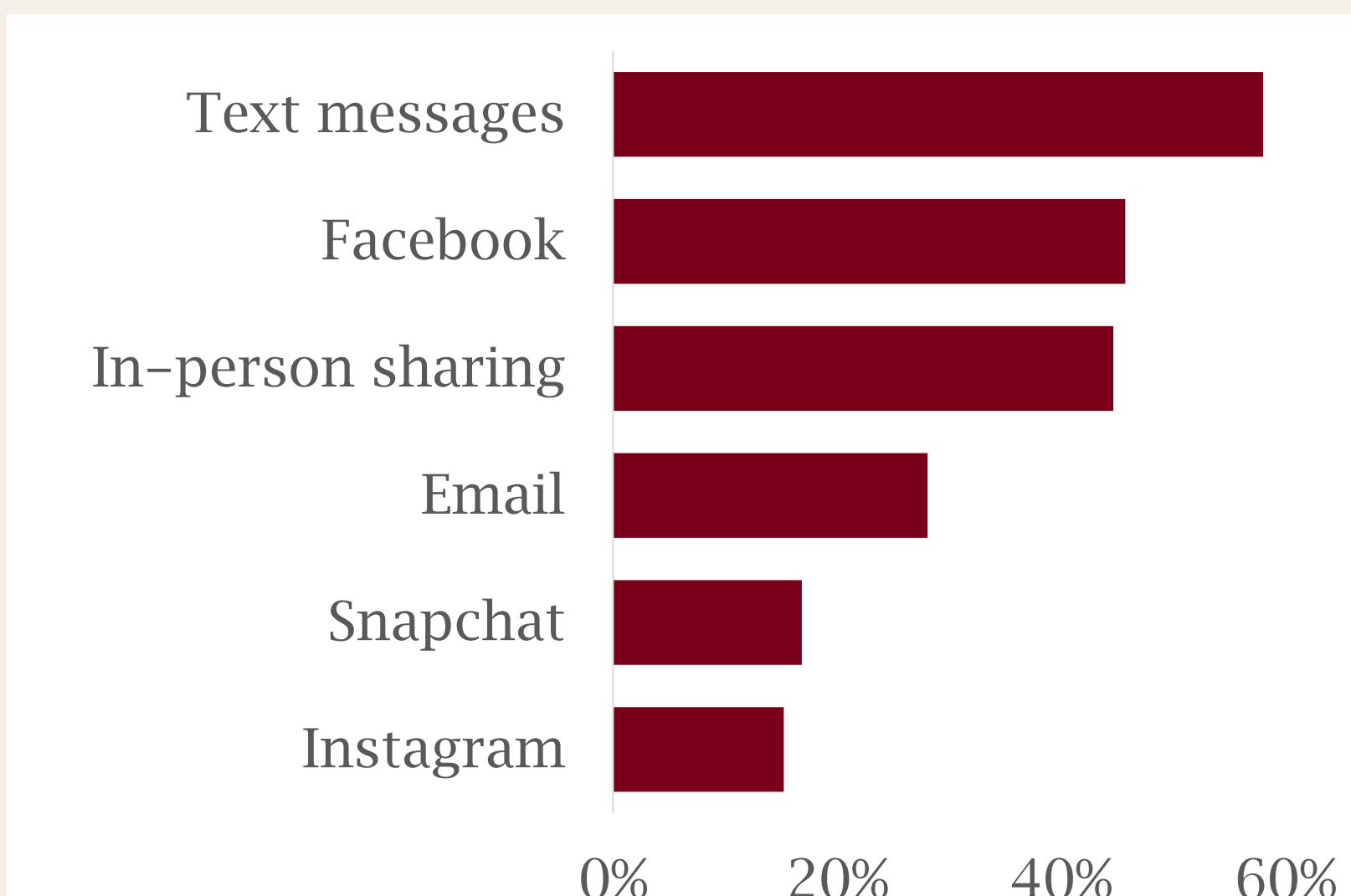


Fig. 9: Bemidji winter visitors' top six medium to share about their trips (n=374)

Discussion

Visitor characteristics

- Generation X & Baby Boomers are two key age groups

Trip profile

- Sporting events and visiting family & friends were important to drawing visitors in winter
- Dining out is the most frequently participated activity.
- Most visitors stayed at a hotel.
- Lodging and dining out are the two largest spending categories.

Trip planning and sharing

- Most planned their trips less than two months in advance.
- Both word of mouth and information online (Internet search & destination website) are frequently used information sources.
- Individual sharing (text messages & in-person) and Facebook are both important sharing medium.
- Snapchat and Instagram shouldn't be ignored.